Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1240

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

USMISSION USNATO

CONFIDENTIAL ANKARA 2348

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, TU, BE, US, EEC, NATO

SUBJECT: BELGIAN FONMIN SIMONET VISITS ANKARA

- 1. BEGIN SUMMARY: BELGIAN FONMIN HENRI SIMONET VISITED TURKEY MARCH 27 AND 28 AND MADE CALLS ON TURKISH LEADERS. AT HIS REQUEST, HE ALSO CALLED ON AMERICAN AMBASSADOR FOR READOUT ON CURRENT STATE OF TURKISH-US RELATIONS. IN A PREDEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE, BELGIAN FONMIN COMMENTED ON NECESSITY FOR WEST TO BETTER UNDERSTAND TURKEY AND HELP IT FIND WAY OUT OF PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. END SUMMARY
- 2. BELGIAN FONMIN HENRI SIMONET HAS JUST COMPLETED CONFIDENTIAL

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A TWO-DAY VISIT TO ANKARA DURING WHICH HE HAD "USEFUL" MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT KORUTURK, PRIMIN ECEVIT, FONMIN OKCUN, AND OTHER TURKISH OFFICIALS. PRESS REPORTING OF THE VISIT WAS LIMITED, BUT TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) PROVIDED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE.

3. TRT IN ITS MID-DAY NEWSCAST MARCH 28 AND PRO-GOVERNMENT

MILLIYET ON MARCH 29 REPORTED THE REMARKS MADE BY FONMIN SIMONET AT A PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM ANKARA. THE FONMIN GAVE HIGH PRAISE TO TURKEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO NATO. HE ALSO TOLD NEWSMEN THAT AFTER HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE TURKISH FONMIN AND PRIMIN ECEVIT HE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT "THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IS DISAPPOINTED BY THE SHADOW CAST OVER ITS RELATIONS WITH THE WEST." SIMONET SAID HE CONCURS WITH THE TURKISH VIEW THAT THE SHADOW WAS CAST BECAUSE THE WEST DOES NOT UNDERSTAND TURKEY PROPERLY. THE US IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPROVING THIS SITUATION, SIMONET ADDED.

- 4. WITH REFERENCE TO TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE EEC, THE BELGIAN FONMIN TOLD REPORTERS FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE EEC "WILL REQUIRE A RELATIVELY LONG TIME." HE ALSO NOTED THAT BELGIUM AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD ASSIST TURKEY TO OVERCOME ITS ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.
- 5. AMBASSADOR, AT SIMONET'S REQUEST, MET WITH HIM FOR AN HOUR EVENING OF MARCH 27. SIMONET SAID HE WOULD VALUE FURTHER INSIGHT INTO US ATTITUDE AND POSITION ON TURKEY AND ITS ROLE IN NATO. HE SAID HE HAD NO WISH TO INTERFERE BUT FELT US EMBARGO WAS AN ERROR AND WOULD, IF IT PERSISTED, ALIENATE THIS IMPORTANT COUNTRY FROM WESTERN CONNECTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. AMBASSADOR REVIEWED BACKGROUND OF EMBARGO, DESCRIBED VARIOUS POLITICAL PRESSURES WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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OPERATED ON THIS ISSUE, AND NOTED US POLICY WAS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW AND THAT CKKLEAR ADMINISTRATION POSITION HAD BEEN PROMISED BY TIME OF APRIL 6 HEARINGS ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE. US WAS WELL AWARE OF TURKEY'S IMPORTANCE AND NEED TO STRENGTHEN ITS WESTERN LINKS AND ORIENTATION. SPIERS

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